

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT:PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH MARVIN KALB, CBS RADIO, FIRST LINE REPORT, AUGUST 23:
2. THERE IS A TIME IN THE AFFAIRS OF STATES WHEN FAILURE IS SUCCESS. SUCH A TIME IS NOW IN AMERICAN-CHINESE RELATIONS.
3. SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE HAS NOW COMPLETED TWO DAYS OF TALKS IN CHINA. HE HAS TWO MORE DAYS TO GO BEFORE RETURNING TO JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES. THE CORE PROBLEM--THE STICKING POINT, TO QUOTE ONE US OFFICIAL-- IS TAIWAN, THE ISLAND OFF CHINA THAT HAS BEEN THE HOME OF THE DEFEATED NATIONALISTS EVER SINCE THE COMMUNISTS

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SEIZED THE MAINLAND IN 1949. BOTH WASHINGTON AND PEKING AGREE THAT THERE IS BUT ONE CHINA, AND TAIWAN IS PART OF IT. YET, THE UNITED STATES MAINTAINS FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN AS THOUGH IT WERE CHINA. MOREOVER, THE US HAS A DEFENSE PACT WITH TAIWAN DATING BACK TO 1954, AND IT STILL HAS MORE THAN A THOUSAND TROOPS ON THE ISLAND, THIS NUMBER, THOUGH, SHRINKING RAPIDLY IN

RECENT YEARS.

4. TAIWAN IS AN EMOTIONAL POLITICAL ISSUE IN THE US. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, EAGER TO GET SENATE APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT GIVING UP CONTROL OVER THE PANAMA CANAL BY THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, DOES NOT WANT TO INCUR THE WRATH OF CONGRESSIONAL CONSERVATIVES BY APPEARING TO BE WORKING OUT AN ARRANGEMENT WITH PEKING THAT RESULTS IN GIVING UP CONTROL OVER TAIWAN. EVEN THAT KIND OF APPEARANCE COULD JEOPARDIZE SENATE APPROVAL OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY. THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS THAT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, A TEST CASE OF THE PRESIDENT'S ABILITY NOT ONLY TO RUN FOREIGN POLICY BUT TO CONTROL IT, AS WELL.

5. SO, SECRETARY VANCE HAS BEEN PUT IN A POSITION OF AVOIDING SUCCESS, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING. THE ISSUE OF TAIWAN CAN BE DISCUSSED, BUT IT CANNOT BE SETTLED ON THIS TRIP. FAILURE THUS BECOMES A FORM OF SUCCESS. BUT DIPLOMACY IS A RUNNING STORY, THE END OF ONE SEQUENCE BECOMING THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT. SO VANCE CANNOT REGARD THIS MISSION TO PEKING AS A PERSONAL PURSUIT OF FAILURE. QUITE THE CONTRARY. THE SECRETARY MUST PREPARE THE GROUND FOR THE ULTIMATE AIM OF AMERICAN POLICY, WHICH IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PEKING EVEN IF THE PRICE IS UNCLASSIFIED

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A BREAK IN RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN AND AN END TO AMERICA'S DEFENSE TREATY WITH THE NATIONALIST CHINESE. VANCE SHOULD LEARN WHETHER THE COMMUNIST CHINESE ARE PREPARED TO COMPROMISE ON THIS ISSUE. FROM ALL SIGNS THEY ARE NOT SO INCLINED. THE COMPROMISING WILL HAVE TO BE DONE BY WASHINGTON IF THERE IS TO BE AN AGREEMENT AT ALL.

6. THE CHINESE MARCH TO THEIR OWN DRUMMER. THEY HAVE JUST COMPLETED A PARTY CONGRESS RATIFYING THE NEW LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY. THE SUCCESSOR TO MAO TSE-TUNG, THE REVOLUTIONARY LEADER WHO DIED LAST YEAR, IS HUA KUO-FENG, FIFTY-SEVEN, A TECHNOCRAT FLANKED IN THE RULING TROIKA BY A SEVENTY-NINE-YEAR-OLD MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND A SEVENTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD DEPUTY PREMIER. THE BROAD OUTLINES OF THEIR POLICY ARE CLEAR: ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT, A RETREAT FROM THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION--IN FACT, AN END TO IT--AND A REAFFIRMATION OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS; ON THE FOREIGN FRONT, A REPEAT OF MAO'S LITANY, ALL OUT HOSTILITY TOWARDS RUSSIA, THE POSSIBILITY OF A MODEST ACCOMMODATION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

7. THOSE OFFICIALS WHO PRESSED, BUT LOST, THE CAUSE

OF QUICK NORMALIZATION WITH PEKING ARGUE THAT THESE POLICIES ARE FRAGILE, THAT IF THE US DOES NOT ACT QUICKLY ON TAIWAN, PEKING MAY SHIFT THE FOCUS OF ITS POLICY AND WARM UP ITS RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA. THAT IS NOT NECESSARILY SO. THE CURRENT HOSTILITY BETWEEN MOSCOW AND PEKING MAY NOT LAST FOREVER, BUT THERE IS NO SIGN OF RAPPROCHEMENT AT THIS TIME.

8. SO, IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE US HAS SOME TIME ON ITS HANDS. KEEPING THE DOOR WIDE OPEN TO CHINA MAY BE AS VALUABLE AT THE MOMENT AS NORMALIZATION ITSELF. CHRISTOPHER

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